

Impact of the Physical Therapy Reimbursement Policies on Various Levels of Medical Institutes

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Reimbursement policy for medical services affect the distribution of medical resources thus it potentially affect the medically related manpower and operation. Reimbursement policy is also a powerful tool for improving medical services, especially in the age of managed care. Reimbursement policies for physical therapy services in Taiwan have undergone a great deal of transformation as a result of changes in insurance underwriting agencies and their policies. The purpose of this research was to investigate the impact of five different physical therapy payment methods on various levels of medical institutes and on the expenditure of the National Health Insurance (NHI) Bureau since its inception. The five payment methods included three-level pricing method, proposed one-level method by NHI bureau, proposed two-level method by Physical Therapy Association, revised three-level, and four-level pricing method. Physical therapy reim-

bursement by Bureau of National Health Insurance for medical centers, hospitals, and clinics in Taipei during the period of August through October 1997 were reviewed. A total of 16 items from medical ordinance 42001A to 42016C were used for calculation. The result of this investigation indicated that the revised three-level pricing and the four-level pricing method made little changes to the majority of medical institutes, except the rehabilitation clinics which would have decreased payment. The proposed one-level pricing method benefited all but class A hospitals. The two-level pricing method benefited all but class C hospitals and clinics. The revised three-level pricing method were most efficient from the view point of lost containment. The possible impact on service quality and service availability by the different pricing methods were also discussed. (JPTA ROC 1999;24(2):63-69)

Key Words: National health care insurance, Reimbursement, Physical therapy